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2.5.2. Situation in SAF-controlled areas

Nuba in South Kordofan

Nuba is a collective name referring to 'ethnic groups of African origin living in the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan or originating from that region'.^{[462](#)} A report published in April 2026 by The Nuba Mountains Observatory for Human Rights, as reported by Dabanga, documented '228 Nuba civilian inmates and detainees held in prisons, police stations, and military and security detention centres in Kadugli locality, South Kordofan.' The source reported that 'the military intelligence, the security service, a security cell and affiliated "irregular groups" were accused of "carrying out arrest campaigns based on suspected cooperation with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North (SPLM-N^{[463](#)}) or the RSF".'^{[464](#)}

The Kanabi and Nuba in Al Jazirah

While there are no accurate population estimates, 'the number of Al-Kanabi inhabitants is significant, especially in Al Jazirah State,' where they are estimated to constitute roughly half of the population.^{[465](#)} The Kanabi include groups like the Bargo, Tama, Hausa, Aringa, Mararit, Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit, Daju, Messiria, Awlad Rashid, Rizeigat, Nuba people, and groups of South Sudan, along with other smaller tribes.^{[466](#)} The Kanabi are a marginalised community often living in small farming settlements known as *kambos*. An investigative report by CNN in collaboration with Sudan War Monitor published in December 2025 noted that the SAF and allied militias, most notably the Sudan Shield Forces (SSF), systematically targeted Kanabi farming communities in Al Jazirah and Sennar states. Between October 2024 and May 2025, the SAF and allied militias attacked 39 *kambos* in Al Jazirah and another 18 in neighbouring Sennar state. Attacks on an additional 87 *kambos* were reported across the two states.^{[467](#)}

Evidence documented 'shocking incidents' where Kanabi people, as the residents of agricultural labourers' camps, were targeted for their ethnic origin, particularly individuals from Tama, Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit and Misseriya groups, on allegation of "'collaboration with the RSF"'.^{[468](#)}

Drawing on survivor testimonies, verified videos, satellite imagery, and interviews with whistleblowers, Sudan War Monitor (SWM) noted on patterns of mass arrests, killings, village burnings, and bodies reportedly dumped in canals. The findings suggested that the violence was not isolated but part of a broader pattern of reprisals against communities perceived as linked to the RSF, particularly after SAF regained control of Wad Madani and surrounding areas.

In January 2025, a SAF officer quoted by CNN said that ‘anyone who appeared to be Nuba from western Sudan or from the south was immediately shot.’ Another source indicated that ‘they [the Sudan Shield Forces⁴⁶⁹] consider southerners, or people with African features, as second-class citizens – and therefore disposable.’ The report also notes that the SAF, intelligence services, and allied forces denied or minimised responsibility, while local accounts and open-source evidence pointed to coordinated attacks on civilians.⁴⁷⁰

Individuals from Darfur and Kordofan

In the first half of 2025, many arbitrary detention cases by parties to the conflict involved ethnic profiling, particularly of civilians from Darfur and Kordofan.⁴⁷¹ Multiple incidents involving hate speech amounting to incitement to violence were reported, targeting individuals and communities on an ethnic basis. UN OHCHR received footage in which SAF soldiers can be seen engaging in acts of violence against civilians from western Sudan, including unlawful killings, dehumanising and denigrating victims as *wassekh* (dirt), *afan* (mould), *beheema* (animal), and *abnaa e-dheif* (bastards), and referring to *nadhafa* (cleaning operations) in this context. ⁴⁷²

After re-establishing control over Khartoum and Al Jazirah states in the first quarter of 2025, the SAF reportedly initiated demolishing homes belonging to people allegedly affiliated to the RSF, particularly in areas on the outskirts of Khartoum and in areas formerly under RSF control such as Al Khairat village in East Nile. Residents in the area were mostly originating from Darfur and Kordofan and reportedly as many as 1 000 homes were destroyed. ⁴⁷³SAF officials stated that ‘these districts were sheltering “criminal elements” and functioning as logistical centres for RSF fighters and that these operations are part of a comprehensive counterinsurgency plan aimed at eliminating residual RSF cells.’⁴⁷⁴

The village of Al-Shaqiq, in the Taiba Al-Lahween area, in the Sennar state, was the site of attacks in April 2025, when the SAF-affiliated fighters – namely the BBMB and the Sudan Shield Forces (SSF), as well as the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) personnel – allegedly attacked individuals accused of being ‘RSF “collaborators”’. The violence resulted in the killing of at least 38 civilians, including a significant number of women and members of the Rizeigat Arab community. In the same period, in North Kordofan state, SAF and allied fighters – primarily from the BBMB – ‘executed’ at least 36 civilians in villages near El Obeid following territorial advances. The victims included women and children and were from the Hawazma Arab community and other groups ‘perceived to be supportive of the RSF, including the Misseriya and Bedairiya Aulad Habeeb Arab tribes, and the Falata community’.⁴⁷⁵

Evidence collected by HRW suggested that the military targeted individuals from Darfur, profiling them as collaborators with their adversaries because the RSF originates from that region. HRW documented an account of Darfuri civilians sheltering in Khartoum being beaten and detained by security cell members and told they were ‘troublemakers’ and had ‘brought the war’ to the capital.⁴⁷⁶

In April 2025, at least 64 civilians were reportedly summarily executed by SAF-allied fighters in Khartoum city. The perpetrators targeted individuals affiliated with ethnic groups from the Darfur and Kordofan regions, including four men from the native administrations of the Misseriya, Ta’isha, Salamat and Khuzam Arab communities. In a separate incident,

mustanfareen fighters reportedly entered a local mosque in the Jebel Awliya neighbourhood shortly after afternoon prayers, selected five young men affiliated with ethnic communities from Western Sudan amongst the worshippers, and executed them on the accusation that they had supported the RSF.[477](#)

- [462](#)

Cgrs, The situation of Darfuris and Nuba outside their regions of origin, 28 June 2021, [url](#)

- [463](#)

In February 2025, the SPLM-N Al-Hilu formed an alliance with the RSF. For additional information see the [EUAA COI Query update - April 2025](#).

- [464](#)

Dabanga, Sudan rights group: '9 detainees executed, 246 held in South Kordofan', 22 April 2026, [url](#)

- [465](#)

CNN, Bodies in the canal, 16 December 2025, [url](#)

- [466](#)

SAR, Voices from the Margins: The Struggle of Al-Kanabi Communities in Sudan, 24 March 2025, [url](#)

- [467](#)

CNN, Bodies in the canal, 16 December 2025, [url](#)

- [468](#)

Stj-SY, Over a Thousand Days of War in Sudan, 29 January 2026, [url](#)

- [469](#)

The Sudan Shield Forces is an armed group led by Aby Aqla Keikel. The group was established in 2022, initially siding the SAF, then defecting to the RSF and then going back to fighting for the SAF since October 2024. HRW, Sudan: Armed Group Allied to the Military Attacks Village, 25 February 2025, [url](#)

- [470](#)

Sudan War Monitor, Investigative Report: The Kanabi Killings, 16 December 2025, [url](#); CNN, Bodies in the canal, 16 December 2025, [url](#)

- [471](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Situation in the Sudan, 1 January to 30 June 2025, 19 September 2025, [url](#), para. 44

- [472](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Situation in the Sudan, 1 January to 30 June 2025, 19 September 2025, [url](#), para. 65

- [473](#)

Ayin Network, Sudan Conflict Monitor #21, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

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Ayin Network, Sudan Conflict Monitor #21, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

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UN OHCHR, Human Rights Situation in the Sudan, 1 January to 30 June 2025, 19 September 2025, [url](#), para. 35

- [476](#)

HRW, Sudan: arbitrary detention by army, security forces, 7 April 2026, [url](#)

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UN OHCHR, Human Rights Situation in the Sudan, 1 January to 30 June 2025, [url](#)